



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senator Nozzolio Announces Legislative Measures to Stop Bullying in New York State

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO April 29, 2011

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Continuing his efforts to ensure the safety of students in New York's schools, State Senator Mike Nozzolio is co-sponsoring legislation to strictly prohibit school bullying in all forms. The legislation (S.4921) comprehensively defines bullying to ensure that all students are protected and addresses both conventional bullying and online cyber-bullying. "Bullying is a pervasive problem throughout our nation's schools and the faceless crime of harassment over the internet is the newest and fastest growing form of bullying," said Senator Nozzolio. "We must act now to make our schools safe and to help the thousands of students who are needlessly suffering because they can't escape this growing crime and abuse."

The legislation will require that the code of conduct in every school specifically identify and prohibit bullying, both in-person and cyber-bullying. The legislation protects all students from acts of bullying, regardless of the motivation behind the acts. In addition, this measure would require all teachers and school administrators to be trained in identifying, reporting and mitigating school bullying.

In addition, Senator Nozzolio has drafted and introduced legislation (S.471) to specifically address the growing problem of cyber-bullying by making harassment by electronic mail or computer network a Class E felony. As a strong proponent of harsher penalties for cyber-bullying, Senator Nozzolio has introduced this legislation in the State Senate every year since he drafted the bill in 2006.

"Cyber-bullying often involves vicious and anonymous taunts on social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace. The bullying that often begins in school can carry over after a student goes home and have lasting and devastating effects on the child. Forty-three percent of teenagers have reported being victims of cyber-bullying," said Senator Nozzolio. "This legislation would give law enforcement and the network providers, who actually carry these messages, with the authority they need to stop this serious crime."

“Our children should not have to fear going to school. I will continue fighting to enact this legislation and other measures to address the growing crime of bullying and cyber-bullying. We must ensure a safe learning environment for students so they have the best opportunity to achieve their fullest potential, ” concluded Senator Nozzolio.